FBI File 62- 117290- correspondence with HSCA sections 4/22/91

I can think of no more serious indictment of Blakey and the HSCA that their self-indictment in what they sought and often demanded of the FBI. To the point that I have reviewed this file HSCA and Blakey in particular were utterly lost, had no interest at all in the facts of the crime and reflected no knowledge of those facts, and was grasping at anything and everything almost entirely without relevance to what is known of the crime.

From recollection, the greatest interest reflected to this point is in Willie Somersett. Not even in the other half of that taped alleged threat, the man who made it, Milteer. I can think of no extremist organization about which it did not make extensive demands on the FBI. Nor can I think of any reason to have any rational suspicion of the involvement of any one in the crime itself. (Interest in the NSRP might be justified by Stoner's representation of Ray and the subsequent associations between him and Ray's family. It even wanted and took te FBI's and its own time for the Denver records on the Minuteman. Similarly, with persons, it had continuing interest and made repeated requests of the FBI for financial records on the Ray's father. He had so little money he could not pay for his inexpesnsive home. Daughter Carol Pepper paid a large part of that small sum.

The one think that is new that I have seen is that the FBI had five informers in the Invaders. The FBI does not deny and seems to confirm this, although it had said that it had had but a single informer in that group, five on black matters in Memphis. But why was HSCA interested in the files on the Invaders informer? On the crazy theory that it had caused the violence of 3/28/68 for the purpose of bringing King back to Memphis to kill him then or have him killed. There is nothing in what I know to justify this wild suspicion and the fact is that the Invaders did not cause that disturbance and had absented itself from the march of 3/28/78/ It had no part in it, was not even present.

The HSCA's demands on the FBI were abusive and wasteful. There may have been more and I think there were but I do recall that as many as 25 analysts were assigned to processing HSCA requests. This was costly in terms of money and in terms of the FBI's ability to process records for others, whether in the Congress or FOIA requesters. The latter clearly brought more information to light than HSCA did, too! Blakey personally insisted on these demands when the FBI called the probelms they created to his attention on the ground that he required the requested information, almost always relevant to nothing rational, for scheduled hearings.

Although it does seem to be incredible, to this point the records do not reflect a aingle HSCA request for FBI information related to the facts of the crime. Unless one considers checking the great number of FBI fingerprint records to ascertain if that work was done competently and correctly. It seemed to both want and get all the FBI had on all the Ku Klux Klans and all King "security" files, esp. Atlanta's.

There is no apparent HSCA focus of any kind, on any thing other than reflected above. With all the focus on the klans and so many other groups, some unknown to me, of the right, I've not seen any HSCA request relating to the facts of the crime as alleged by the FBI or local authorities in records that today stack more than a foot in dimension! Instead it seems to be wildly and in a disorganized way trying to follow every irrational theory of any kind or origin. And they in ignorance. For examply, it made a request relating to "Tats" Tarrants, subject of a series of article by Jack Nelson in the LA Times. But not one relating to his known and reported associates. (Miss. bombing case.) It had MURKIN files but I can't think of a single request for information of the many that are obvious from even casual examination of those extensive records. (I think now that 10 field offices in addition to HQ MURKIN records it got.) What I am saying is that in additional to innumerable other defects they are even stupid. They didn't want but I pressed on them the transcripts of the two weeks of Ray evidentiary hearings, where what we adduced was subject to cross-examination. This at the very outset. Yet to this point there is not a single request for information of the FBI in any way related to that tested, factual evidence of the crime itself. One would expect more maturity, more wisdom, more common sense, more of a reflection of a sense of direction, from college kids!

Section 13, the thickest of 22, is almost entirely on the FBI's miscalled Cointelpro activities against blacks in general. While I do not know what is now readily available on this and have not read most of the records fully, I believe this volume may be a good source for those not interested in any full treatment of the FBI's interferences with the most basic Constitutional rights, its propaganda activities against those it does not like but who would at the same time like a reflection of the considerable ~~apeut~~ AMOUNT of time effort and public funds diverted from necessary FBI functions and expended on its police-state activities.

How this was within the committee's mandate is not apparent. There is no reflection of any committee suspicion, leave alone belief, that either the FBI's conduct or the content of the records sought had anything at all to do with the King assassination. However, it is generally accepted, absent some challenge, that such committees write their own tickets.

Also reflected is a rather large number of FBI SAs and then current or former FBI informants the committee wanted to interview. It does not appear to me to be possible that all those many interviews could have had any relationship with the King assassination or its investigation. (What records were disclosed to me do not include the committee's JFK investigation or its communications to the FBI.)

The impression I have to this point is that the committee wanted records on anything and everything black, without any interest in the facts of the crime, its expressed interests having no apparent connection with either the crime or its investigation.

Section 14: I do not intend to suggest that the inordinate attention to the FBI's cointelpro activities is limited to Section 13. It is throughout and half-way through 14 it is the major interest reflected.

My caution not to take the Blakey/HSCA word that the FBI had 5 Invaders informers as necessarily true is justified by an FBI 5/19/78 memo, 926X2: "...file of five informants who provided coverage on the Invaders." Providing coverage does not require membership and almost any black informer could have provided coverage. Just another proof of the economy with truth and fact that was HSCA's hallmark under Blakey.

While without reading the HSCA's actual request one can't be certain about the formulation of them from the FBI's responses the subject is apparent and in some instances the FBI's circumvention also is transparent. Which is to say that it early on recognized the prevalent HSCA incompetence and knew what it could get away with. I read in this section but did not copy a response reflecting this. The inquiry had to do with undescribed radio logs. That they are not described is the first red flag. The next is that the FBI's Memphis response is that it checked all the pertinent indices. Pertinent to what? The FBI's own radio ~~logs~~ logs? Those that are most pertinent the FBI would not have had, would have stayed away from like the plague - the sheriff's. and they did exist and were transcribed. The importance is who first saw the "bundle" and the time of the radio report.

Re what I say about the alleged search for tapes above, see 62-117290-X 61 in Redditt file. They existed and were reviewed by the FBI (p.2 highlighted)

Extent Memphis records: "140 volumes and over 10,000 serials." 62-117290-10 filed "inv."

Extent Dallas JFK holdings: (62-117290-64)

89-43- 122 volumes, 9930 serials (15 linear feet)(JFK assass.)
100-10461 105 volumes, 9360 serials (39 linear feet) (L.H. Oswald)
105-1435 only Marina Oswald file listed, no size indicated. Not only file on her.
44-1639 94 volumes, 6455 serials (16 linear feet) (Ruby)
62-3588 2 volumes, 189 serials (Commission)(Plus holdings of subject books)

Extent New Orleans holdings: (62-117290-72)

both quite incomplete

89-69 54 volumes, 6344 serials (JFK assass.)
100-1660133 ~~serials~~, 1405 serials (Oswald)
100-16926 1 volumes. 15 serials (Marina Oswald)
44-2064 9 volumes, 429 serials (Ruby) (quite incomplete for both offices)

Blakey: if I did not note it earlier in 62 -117290-759 he is working on the suspicion that the Invaders caused the violence (which it didn't) to bring King to Memphis to be killed there. (Also 926X2?)

Extent FBI penetration of organizations of interest to HSCA- required review of about 150 informant files to determine whether informers were members or officers of any.

Volume 18, part 1 is about the size of volume 13 and is even more worthless, except as self-indictment by both the FBI and the HSCA. The first part consists of the utterly irrelevant records relating to the robbing of a bank in Lebanon, Ill. It loved the notion, for which there was no basis in fact or even reasonable suspicion, that John and Jerry Ray had robbed banks to finance Jimmy. Only the records of Jerry's employment ruled it out. Nonetheless, it here has a duplicate of the field office file 91-4669, many records one of which is numbered through 137. Immaterial and irrelevant. Next it goes into these of its records Blakey told it he wants to use at the hearings. Without exception they are s minuscule fraction of those I got and without exception they were carefully selected to make it appear that Ray was guilty. Just as carefully omitted are those that exculpate, which are included in the files from which this selection was made. Even the knowingly false statements taken from Charles Quitman Stephens are included, in the false pretense that he identified Ray as the fleeing assassin, a complete fabrication. But what is omitted and the FBI had was Stephens negative identification a few days later when he was shown the picture of "Galt" graduating from the Lau school of bartending in Los Angeles. This selection includes documents I had gotten from the FBI and Blakey used at the hearings in the false pretense they were produced by the HSCA's own investigation, like the Piedmont Lanudry records. What phonies he and all of them were! Inclusion of these Lebanon bank-robbery records reflects HSCA's belief in their relevance!

From Section 19 it is apparent that HSCA also considered SNCC as possible assassins. Why else would it want SNCC records?